

APPROVED

BEAVERTON TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 5, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

On Thursday, August 5, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., Chairman Scott Knees called the Traffic Commission meeting to order in the Forrest C. Soth City Council Chamber, 4755 SW Griffith Drive, Beaverton, Oregon.

ROLL CALL

Traffic Commissioners present included Scott Knees, Thomas Engel, Lauren Holmes, and Bradford McClean. Commissioners Steve Harris, Patrick Reynolds, and Vincent Tran were absent and excused.

City of Beaverton staff included Project Engineer Baotu Ho, Traffic Sergeant Steven Schaer, and Commission Recorder Debra Callender.

VISITORS

Tali Porietis, Beaverton, said he lives on Adele Drive and he could not attend the June 3 public hearing on Issue TC 671 "Parking Revisions on SW Adele Drive between Valeria View Drive and 105th Terrace." He said the neighbors are professionals who do not have a lot of time on their hands to attend public meetings and testify. He said several neighbors promised to attend, but no one was able to show up to represent their interests. He understands why the Commission thought no one cared; however, he said there is a chronic lack of parking in front of these homes, unlike other parts of the neighborhood. He said there are no security, fire, or width issues to justify restricting parking. He said the homes have garages but no driveways and police regularly leave warning notices on cars parked there. He said it is unfair to not allow parking here when there is a clear parking shortage. He said if they do not remove these parking restrictions people would be very angry and the issue would come back to the City.

Chairman Knees said the staff report agreed with Mr. Porietis' request; however, at the public hearing the Commission had to make a decision and there was a complete lack of oral, written, or even e-mailed testimony. He said he was the only Commissioner who voted in agreement with the staff report. He said the recommendation process is not yet complete because the final written order for TC 671 is on the Commission's Consent Agenda tonight. He was not sure about the procedural options and said he would like to discuss this with Mr. Khasho when he returns. He assured all present that they would be notified of the next steps.

Quan Tron, Beaverton, said he jogs on Adele and he has observed that this is the only section of the street with prohibited parking. He said the street is wide and there is plenty of room for a fire truck to turn and maneuver.

Paul Cohen, Beaverton, said that the left turn from Scholls Ferry into the Washington Square driveway is very dangerous. His wife was injured there and he found it difficult to contact the correct person to complain. He said there are multiple jurisdictions including, Tigard, Beaverton, Washington County, and the State of Oregon. He said a City of Beaverton transportation engineer gave him the names and direct phone numbers of the State engineers who are responsible for this intersection and he talked with them; nevertheless, he is still not satisfied.

Chairman Knees said he would follow up.

STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Ho said he is standing in for Mr. Khasho for two weeks. Referring to Mr. Cohen's statement about Scholls Ferry at the Washington Square driveway, he said after he spoke with Mr. Cohen, he called the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and learned that they are currently redesigning this intersection. ODOT's new design would include a right-in, right-out configuration with a raised median on Scholls Ferry to prevent left turns. He does not know when construction might begin.

Chairman Knees welcomed Bradford McClean, the Commission's newest member.

Commissioner Engel asked for the name of Mr. Ho's ODOT contact and wondered if ODOT has a public comment period for traffic proposals such as this.

Mr. Ho said the ODOT engineer's name is Dennis Mitchell. He will find out if there is a public contact period and, if so, how residents can comment.

CONSENT

Chairman Knees reviewed the consent agenda comprised of the draft minutes of the June 3, 2010, meeting and the Final Written Order on Issue TC 671 "Parking Revisions on SW Adele Drive between Valeria View Drive and 105th Terrace" from the meeting of June 3, 2010.

Chairman Knees pulled Issue TC 671 for separate consideration.

Commissioner Engel MOVED, SECONDED by Chairman Knees to approve the minutes of June 3, 2010, as presented. Commissioners Knees and Engel voting AYE, the MOTION CARRIED unanimously. (2:0) Commissioner Holmes and McClean abstained as they were not at the June 3 meeting.

Regarding Issue TC 671, Chairman Knees said they could continue the issue until the Commission's next meeting or they could approve the draft final written order tonight.

Commissioner Engel MOVED, SECONDED by Commissioner McClean to table Issue TC 671 until it could be considered at a future Commission meeting.

Chairman Knees explained to the newer Commissioners that, if the Commission were to approve Issue TC 671 tonight, someone would need to pay \$250 if they wanted to appeal the recommendation. He would prefer to hold the issue until a later meeting. He said the final order states that one of the reasons for rejecting the staff proposal was the lack of neighborhood testimony, and now they have heard several comments.

Question called on the motion. Commissioners Engel, Holmes, Knees, and McClean, voting AYE, the MOTION CARRIED unanimously. (4:0)

PUBLIC HEARING

Issue TC 674: Traffic Calming Plan for Hart Road/Bany Road between 165th Avenue and 166th Terrace

Chairman Knees opened the public hearing.

Staff Report:

Mr. Ho reviewed the history of Issue TC 674 and said in 2009 the Commission and City Council approved the project ranking list and staff began working with the neighborhood to develop a traffic calming plan. Two options were proposed: Option 1, with speed cushions, and Option 2, with a median island and speed-reader signs. The City held an open house in March 2010 and neighbors selected Option 2.

Mr. Ho said the City conducted a neighborhood survey: 56 response cards were delivered; 38 cards were returned with a "yes" response; 9 cards were returned with a "no" response; one household marked "abstain;" and the remaining 8 response cards were not returned. Based on this data, the proposed selected plan received a 69 percent majority approval rate, which exceeds the 67 percent majority approval rate required by the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Procedures. The estimated construction cost is \$28,000. He said this process meets the Procedure's criteria and requirements and he asked the Commission to approve the proposed plan.

Commissioner Engel asked when the project could be installed if approved tonight.

Mr. Ho answered that it would most likely be installed by the end of this year or early next year. He said the work mainly involves installing two signs but it would depend on the availability of City staff to design and install the signs. The City Council would first have to approve the Commission recommendation on their Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Holmes asked if the project's \$28,000 cost is already budgeted.

Mr. Ho said the funds are budgeted.

Chairman Knees asked why the Hart Road speed limit drops from 35 to 25 mph when the roadway looks the same.

Mr. Ho said he did not know.

Chairman Knees asked for the exact location of the boundary line between the City of Beaverton and Washington County as it crosses Hart and Bany Roads.

Mr. Ho said he did not know the exact location but he could get that information.

Commissioner McClean asked for the cost of proposed Option 1 with its two speed cushions.

Mr. Ho said he did not bring that information to the meeting but he could go upstairs and get the information.

Commissioner McClean asked Mr. Ho for a more specific time estimate to complete the project once Council approves the recommendation and the work actually begins.

Mr. Ho estimated one day to install each sign and one week to install the median, assuming that the Operations Department already has the materials on hand.

Public Testimony:

The Commission received written testimony on this issue from Traffic Sergeant Steven Schaer (on file).

Michelle Kemp, Beaverton, said she is the project requestor. As for the 25 mph speed limit, she explained that there is a small shopping mall with a bus stop in the 25 mph section and also homes with driveways exiting directly onto the street. She said the speed limit drops to 25 mph about two blocks before the City/County boundary line. She said many neighbors wanted to install speed cushions; however, the merchants objected so the neighbors compromised. She said it is difficult for pedestrians to cross the road to reach the bus stop or market, and it is difficult to pull into traffic from the side streets. She said drivers speed when ascending and descending the hill. She said drivers slow down when the police temporarily put out the speed reader carts.

John Kemp, Beaverton, explained the process used when the speed zone was lowered to 25 mph. He said the County has been unresponsive to the neighbor's complaints about speeding cars. He said this plan is not perfect but it is the best they could do considering how many people they had to satisfy.

Andrew Macklem, Beaverton, said he supports the measure and he hopes it passes.

Wendell Cockrell, Beaverton, said he is a Texas A&M civil engineering graduate and he does not support this proposal because he thinks he could achieve the same results less expensively. He said he regularly uses this street and has seen no traffic problems. He said the proposed traffic island is already delineated by pavement striping and that is enough. He said the inconsistent speed limit is the problem, and one 25 mph speed sign is obscured by vegetation. He said he wrote to the Public Works Department in May about this and it still has not been corrected.

Mr. Cockrell said pedestrians have problems because the south side of the sidewalk is covered by blackberry vines between Hargis Road and 166th. He said drivers turning off Murray onto Hart are unaware that the speed limit drops to 25 mph farther down Hart.

He suggested installing signs say "Congestion" and "Reduce Speed Now" to warn drivers to slow down. Driving east from 170th, drivers would have better sight distance if the vegetation were cleared. He thinks these changes should be tried before the City spends money on a permanent traffic calming solution.

Commissioner McClean asked if he would oppose this plan if cost were not an issue.

Mr. Cockrell said they should follow the system doctors use—treat the symptoms with the simplest procedure first. If that does not work, then try something more drastic.

Commissioner McClean asked if Mr. Cockrell believes some calming is needed.

Mr. Cockrell said he asked the City Traffic Engineer for an exact explanation of the problem and he has not received an answer that satisfied him. He said doubts there is a real speeding problem; nevertheless, his plan would improve the situation.

Ryan Parnenter, Beaverton, said he often rides his bicycle on this part of Hart as he commutes from West Beaverton to his office at Washington Square. He said he saw the public notice signs and wanted to know if they planned to add bike lanes. He wanted to know if Hart/Bany is an Arterial or Collector Street and he asked if there had been traffic collisions involving bicycles or pedestrians in this area.

Chairman Knees said this part of the meeting is not interactive, but he would ask Mr. Ho to provide what information when public testimony ended. He agreed the idea of adding bike lanes was interesting and he would like to know staff's thoughts.

Rhonda Coakley, Beaverton, Chair, Sexton Mountain NAC said this section of Hart/Bany has had accidents and some pedestrians have had close calls. She said there are posted speed signs, yet drivers choose to drive faster than the speed limit. She thanked Mr. Khasho for his patience as the neighborhood worked through the process and overcame barriers. She said the neighbors preferred the speed cushions in Option 1; however, they thought Option 2 was less invasive and more likely to gain the approval of the merchants and some reluctant residents. She said the flashing speed signs would send the right message. She agreed there are major vegetation issues and said some of these are in Washington County.

Paul Cohen, Beaverton, said he recently became involved with the Police Phantom Park Program where volunteers park empty police cars alongside roads to slow traffic. Mr. Cohen said they frequently park a phantom car on Hart/Bany and, even with that, drivers speed—though some see the car and hit the brakes. He said he supports this proposal.

Staff Comments:

Mr. Ho said Hart is a Collector Street, though he does not know if Bany is. He said he would need to check with Mr. Khasho about adding bike lanes on Hart Road and he promised to keep the Commission informed. He will ask the City's landscape crew to clean up the vegetation around the speed limit signs to improve visibility.

Chairman Knees closed the public hearing.

Commission Deliberation:

Commissioner McClean thanked those who testified and said the testimony showed there is need for improvement. He said the plan is reasonable and he is pleased that more than 67 percent agreed with the proposal.

Commissioner Holmes said she was not on the Commission for the project's first hearing but it was clear there was strong neighborhood support and staff had provided good options. She will support the recommendation.

Commissioner Engel said he supports the proposal.

Commissioner Engel MOVED, SECONDED by Commissioner Holmes to approve Issue TC 674 "Traffic Calming Plan for Hart Road/Bany Road between 165th Avenue and 166th Terrace" as presented and the draft final written order. Commissioners Engel, Holmes, Knees, and McClean voting AYE, the MOTION CARRIED unanimously. (4:0)

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Ho said on June 28 the City Council approved Issues TC 667, 668, and 670. He said Council pulled Issue TC 669 for future deliberation, and on July 12 Council approved TC 669.

Chairman Knees asked what Mr. Ho knew about the status of TC 666, which Council pulled from its Consent Agenda in order to hold its own public hearing.

Mr. Ho said it is scheduled on the Council agenda as an Action Item on August 16.

Chairman Knees asked if he had any insight as to Council's leaning on this issue.

Mr. Ho said he did not.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

The August 5, 2010, meeting of the Traffic Commission adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Debra Callender, Commission Recorder